Hangtown – Det 697

By Richard Hansen

Hangtown Detachment 697 of the Marine Corps League, with the help of local businesses and service organizations, conducted a very successful "Toys for Tots 2004" campaign. Toy collections began with two local community events in mid-November. The Second Annual Classic Car Show and an Annual Motorcycle Toy Run yielded approximately 459 gifts and toys. In early December, another annual event, the Placerville Christmas Parade, contributed another 684 gifts and toys to our campaign. Altogether, the campaign received 11,124 toys and $5,662 in cash donations. In partnership with the El Dorado Hills Associated Firefighters, who supplied another 6,217 toys, a total of 16,581 toys and stocking stuffers were distributed to over 2,567 boys and girls in El Dorado County. The remaining 760 toys were given to community service organizations in support of their outreach programs. Most of the gifts were distributed at the Boys and Girls Club located at the Placerville California National Guard Armory on December 19th. In several instances needy families were unable to attend the toy give away due to illnesses or lack of transportation. In response, Hangtown Leaguers contacted the families, determined their toy needs and delivered some to their doorsteps. The toy giveaway included 216 bicycles. Some were new but inmates at Folsom State Prison had refurbished most of the toys with new parts being purchased at a local bicycle shop by other volunteers. Each bicycle recipient was given a new helmet, thanks to the El Dorado County Professional Firefighters Association. Volunteers assisting in the toy distribution included the Hangtown Marine Cadets, El Dorado County Firefighters, Boys and Girls Club members, employees of Blue Shield of California and others from the community. The El Dorado Food Bank, who works year around supplying food for needy families, was instrumental in signing up qualified recipients. To show appreciation for the community's participation, the Detachment awarded 79 Certificates of Appreciation, 21 Commanders Awards and 2 engraved plaques.

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